

Hocart—Lau Islands, Fiji

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get fever. They evidently mean by fever not any rise of temperature, but dengue and similar attacks. 757

Imbewalu (eight mats).—So named because with this disease the sick man is confined so long that eight mats have rotted and been removed; then it will be known whether he will live or die. The seat of the disease is in the buttocks, which swell and remain swollen; sometimes they rot (*popo*). It is said to be due to witchcraft. 755

I wawa (waiting remedy) or *i vakatawa, locum tenens*.—[Presumably this is a preliminary treatment, it may be for convalescence.] Strain leaves of *sinu nganga*; then drink. No tapu.

Karaki ndra.—The steam of a *sairula* banana sucker, and the stems of *waro* and *etueveve*, scrape these two together and wrap all three together in a reticulum.

Kasi.—The nature of *kasi* is not clear. There are at least three varieties: blood *kasi* (*kasi ndra*), swelling disease, accompanied by local inflammation; white man's *kasi* (*kasi ni papalangi*). Said by one informant to be *kasi ndra*; by another to appear in the buttocks and differ from *imbe walu* in not being serious; *kasi ndro* [probably believed to be due to witchcraft]. The Moala notebook describes it thus: "This disease arises with coughing; it is a throbbing pain [*? langa*] in the ribs and reaches the back." Remedy, strain *selekaleka* in a taro swamp with two leaves of *sikavi loa* as a cup. Tapu: sea water and red things.

Madness.—The theory that madness is due to a spirit carrying off the soul is 158 dealt with on page 187. Melaia's views on madness are as follows: 828

There have been three madmen in Yandrana: Taikiko and the brothers Tukeli and Suka. Tukeli used to plant taro at low tide below high water mark. Suka went about naked; he had many sisters, yet he would put on no clothes. He once hit a young lady of Tumbou on the head; a leech sucked the blood from her wound and the people of Yandrana made a supplication (*soro*) to Tumbou. Taikiko married a very old woman and his madness grew up in him, whether she was the cause of his madness or whether spirits (*tevoru*) ate his soul. Why he married her? Probably the madness was coming on. They are all the same in that family. Perhaps a madman was their ancestor (*isupua*); perhaps their god (*tevoru*) was created mad, since madness does not leave them. Perhaps they took the earth of oven holes for their ointment or to bathe in, for they lay in oven holes. Ratu Meli was mad at one time and it is said there was a disease in his forehead which went down and, as it were, covered his eyes.

Mathake.—The result of sweet food, affects only certain persons. 755

Constipation.—Remedy: scrape *mboimboinda*, chew *nde ni singa*; drink, once only. 757

Tapu: sweet food. [262]

Mara.—A disease of the joints; the skin cracks if the disease lasts long, may cause deformed noses (*uthu tha*). Emosi claims it is his disease.

I merely touch the wrist and he recovers. It is a hereditary disease,²² it is mine I know it; it is not like others who know only it is their disease because they massage it and in time the patient gets better; I know it by touch; I am on the lookout (*vakarongotha*); that disease will jump on to my hand, and I know it is mine; when I touch the wrist it leaps upon me; it is very painful to me. There are no leaves, merely one called *vono ni vuthe* to massage with (*i yamo*). This massage is hereditary. If the parents die while the child has as yet no understanding, he will still know the cure when he grows up. All my family know it.

Misungga.—Remedy from the Moala notebook: scrape Brazilian plum and Tahitian chestnut; water with two red coconuts which must not be dropped on the ground, but must be carried down from the tree, . . . and pour on the leaves. Tapu: cohabitation, salt water, and sweets. [262 834]

Octopus (*kuita*).—Apparently a general name for disease: which involves a widespread pain as in headache and neuralgia; specific names given are: peeping octopus, (*kuita iro*) is like an octopus peeping from its hole; in it the pain comes about four in the afternoon; shut octopus (*kuita, songosongo*); strayed octopus (*kuita siri*), brain

²² The knowledge of it is hereditary.

435 (*tambua*) of the sperm whale. The whale's tooth serves as
436 a medium of exchange and as a means by which wealth can
be accumulated, condensed, and stored. It cannot, however,
serve as a standard of value because its ceremonial significance
imparts to it an immeasurably sacred value which cannot be
compared with the exchange value of other objects. The
[556] indefinite term "big" (*levu*) is used to express victory in the
economic competition of gift exchange. The donor whose
gift is "big" wins prestige.

431 The Lauan principle of gift exchange emphasizes communal
556 industry and group prestige rather than individual enterprise.
476 It would completely discourage initiative were it not reciprocal
and self-perpetuating. In an exchange of property each party
seeks to give more than he receives and thus through a material
loss to secure a social gain. But the gain in prestige is not
permanent. A man or group must continue to distribute in
order to maintain the acquired status. Hence it is really the
far-sighted, industrious man or group which wins in the long
run. Work is rewarded and laziness loses out.

732 The case of Wai illustrates the point. Wai is a half-caste
●158 whose mother was a native from the island of Komo and
554 whose father was a European. He is the most maladjusted
individual on Kambara. He is physically handicapped not
only because of his small bones and relatively short stature
but also because he limps badly. Any physical defect such
as lameness, blindness, or elephantiasis is mocked by the
natives, and on this account Wai has had his share of ridicule.
[797] Besides, Wai is classed as a bastard which, since the advent of
[648] the missionaries, has been severely censured. Since his father
was a European, the natives insist that he has no clan and
no land. However, he has been given the use of land in the
clan of his wife's mother who came from Tokalau.

158 Wai is known as the laziest man on Kambara. At the
554 time of our visit to Kambara he had a house in Tokalau, but
the thatched roof leaked, and he with his wife and bastard

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son lived in the house of his wife's cross cousin and family of ten. Malakai not only sheltered but also fed Wai's family. Wai neither fished nor cultivated the land he was allowed to use, but roamed about the bush satisfying his hunger with fruits, nuts, and wood grubs, and by soliciting or filching from the gardens of his wife's relatives. Once we watched him hunting edible wood grubs which live in rotted tree trunks. The saliva ran from his mouth when he discovered a nest of them, and in a very short time he had consumed all forty-six grubs. Often when we had planned a day's trip to another village Wai would miraculously appear out of the bush to beg a canoe ride, which could not be refused without losing face, and partake of the feast of welcome prepared by our hosts. In spite of his frequent thefts and general shiftlessness Wai managed to keep out of court by the ingenious method of disappearing from the islands just before the native provincial circuit court was scheduled to arrive, and returning to continue his parasitic existence after it had left. Wai is an example of a man who exploited the institution of soliciting. His was the lowest standard of living on Kambara and he held the lowest social status.

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[262]

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WHITE MAN'S GOLD

*Votavota ko lewa, mata tha,
Ndigitaka ka levu, ka visa.*

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Your evil eye esteems your share too small,
And prompts you greedily to aim at all.

*Fijian proverb.*³⁵

BEFORE mission teachings had gained a foothold on Kambara, the introduction of the sweet potato from Tonga, and later of the South American tapioca from Vanua Vatu in Lau, according to informants, began to revolutionize the economic

³⁵ Thomas Williams and J. Calvert, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 110.